

From: [Carol Koster](#)
To: [E-OHPSCA2713.EBSA](#)
Subject: Objection to Mandates in "Obamacare" re: "Religious Employers"
Date: Monday, August 08, 2011 6:13:29 AM

Dear Sec. Sebelius:

I want to voice my objection as a citizen and as a devout, practicing Roman Catholic to implementing mandates on all religious employers under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act aka "Obamacare", regardless of definition of "religious employer" and regardless of who was or wasn't a "religious employer" prior to the enacting of the act and signing into law by Congress and Pres. Obama.

These mandates - in response to the Institute of Medicine's advisory report issued to HHS - require that all insurance plans provide coverage for all prescription contraceptives approved by the FDA, as well as abortifacients such as the "morning after" pill and "Ella" (a drug similar to RU-486 which can induce an abortion some weeks into pregnancy).

There are a few exceptions and these include those group health plans which were in effect before the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (Health Care Reform) was enacted, along with those offered by employers who are deemed by HHS to qualify as a "religious employer." However, the definition of "religious employer" is so narrow that its applicability negates most religious employers within the United States.

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) has voiced its strict opposition to and disappointment with this final Act of HHS, due to its failure to ensure respect for rights of conscience when developing such mandates. The National Catholic Bioethics Center (NCBC) has also strongly opposed this mandate. The Louisiana Conference of Catholic Bishops (my home state) objects to these provisions as well.

Please reconsider implementation as written and defined, and consider redefining "religious employer" to be less narrow.

I oppose to the definition of "religious employer" within the context of a lack of true conscience protection!

Thank you,

--Carol Koster, Louisiana